

Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following two nominations: Calendar No. 807, Jerome H. Powell, and Calendar No. 809, Philip Nathan Jefferson; that there be 60 minutes for debate, equally divided in the usual form, on each nomination; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the Record; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I want to be clear about what this unanimous consent request is about and what it attempts to do. It is an attempt not to vote, to not have the vote on Lisa Cook, the nominee. I have to say it is a reminder of how short memories are around here.

The irony of this situation we find ourselves in is that the vacancy on the Federal Reserve Board is only a vacancy because, when Republicans had COVID absences, our Democratic colleagues would not extend the courtesy of rescheduling the vote to confirm Judy Shelton. Instead, the vote failed, and she was not confirmed. Then, lo and behold, we have this vacancy that has been proposed to be filled by Lisa Cook.

I should also point out how persistently we tried in good faith and on multiple occasions to process Fed noms throughout this entire year. We could have confirmed Chairman Powell in January. We could have processed four out of five of the Fed noms in the Banking Committee very quickly, including Ms. Cook, but our Democratic colleagues refused to allow us to process those four out of five because we did not want to process Sarah Raskin.

Now, Ms. Raskin ended up having to withdraw because there was bipartisan opposition to the radical views that she had espoused that the regulatory apparatus of the Fed ought to be used to allocate capital throughout our economy. Fortunately, there was bipartisan opposition to this idea.

Now it appears—and I guess it is the logic of my colleagues—that we can proceed as long as we are confirming everyone but Chairman Powell first. I don't understand why that has to be, but they filed cloture before the Easter break, on Professor Cook, and now they find themselves in this awkward position.

Here is what it boils down to. It is very simple. I want to vote on all of the noms. Republicans are ready to vote on all of the noms. Our Democratic colleagues have complained

about not having votes. We want to vote. We want to vote on Lisa Cook. We want to vote on Chairman Powell. We want to vote on Mr. Jefferson.

We are ready to vote, not to cancel a vote, so I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I understand that the objection holds—that the ranking member of the Senate's Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee is essentially saying he is not willing to vote on all three of these—two of them right now, the other one a bit later. I mean, it could be right now. Again, we have tried to move on these nominations.

My friend from Pennsylvania launched a boycott of a committee that I have never seen or a boycott which actually, because of the 50-50 Senate, stopped us—literally stopped us—from holding a vote. He knows that, and he knows they have done everything they can to stop Lisa Cook's nomination—everything.

I would point out also that it is not exactly an accurate version of history. Judy Shelton, whom my colleague mentioned, would have gone down if everybody had been there. He forgets that part. It wasn't just one Republican Member who was sick; it was another Republican Member who was going to vote no, and he understood the array of people in both parties who were opposed to Ms. Shelton.

In understanding that, my colleague is saying let's not vote on any of the three of them—on either the two of them today and then Lisa Cook later. I understand the rules of the Senate, and that is the way it will be.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 844, Lisa DeNell Cook, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the unexpired term of fourteen years from February 1, 2010.

Charles E. Schumer, Mazie Hirono, Martin Heinrich, Tim Kaine, Jack Reed, Jacky Rosen, Ben Ray Lujan, Christopher A. Coons, Alex Padilla, Sheldon Whitehouse, Sherrod Brown, Debbie Stabenow, Christopher Murphy, Patrick J. Leahy, John W. Hickenlooper, Tammy Baldwin, Angus S. King.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Lisa DeNell Cook, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the unexpired term of fourteen years from February 1, 2010, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 47, nays 51, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 137 Ex.]

YEAS—47

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Kelly	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sinema
Carper	Leahy	Smith
Casey	Lujan	Stabenow
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	

NAYS—51

Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Schumer
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Collins	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lankford	Shelby
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Toomey
Daines	Moran	Tuberville
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Fischer	Paul	Young

NOT VOTING—2

Murphy Wyden

(Mr. KAINE assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. HICKENLOOPER assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. KING assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). On this vote, the yeas are 47, the nays are 51.

The motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider the failed cloture vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the cloture motion with respect to the Bedoya nomination because we have some absences due to illness.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE
CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of Executive Calendar No. 800.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—ORDER OF
PROCEDURE

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, the chairman of the Banking Committee spoke before this vote and made the point that he wants to have a vote on all three Fed noms. I want to have a vote on all of the three Fed noms who have been under consideration and in the exchanges today. Republicans want to vote on all three.

We just voted on one of the three our Democratic colleagues had filed cloture on. The cloture ripened—it came due—and we had the vote. So the obvious thing to do here is to set up votes on the other two. The other two are Chairman Powell, who is currently the Chairman and has been nominated by President Biden to another term as Chairman, and Philip Jefferson, who has also been nominated by President Biden. I think he would be the second African-American man in, maybe, the history of the Fed. I am not positive of that, but I think so.

It makes a lot of sense to go with both of them because there is overwhelming support for them. In fact, in the committee, Chairman Powell, I think, was reported out successfully. I think there was only one vote in opposition to Chairman Powell. He was overwhelmingly supported in the committee, and I think, very likely, overwhelmingly would be supported on the floor. Mr. Jefferson was unanimously reported out of the committee. In other words, every single Republican and Democrat on the Banking Committee supported Philip Jefferson, and I am pretty sure still does, as I do.

My point is, I think we ought to go ahead and set up the votes. We don't have to have the votes right this minute, but we should set them up, and we should do it soon. So I have a unanimous consent request which is identical to the unanimous consent request that was just proposed by our chairman but for the reference to Lisa Cook. Since we just had that vote, obviously, it doesn't make sense to include her in the unanimous consent request.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, following consultation with the Republican leader, prior to April 29, 2022, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar No. 807, Jerome H. Powell, and Calendar No. 809, Philip Nathan Jefferson; that there be 60 minutes for debate, equally divided in the usual form, on each nomination; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote, without intervening action or debate, on the nominations in

the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object.

I was going to say it is disappointing—I guess “appalling” would be the better word—but it is not at all surprising because I have watched my colleagues do everything they can to slow and delay, even boycott actual votes en bloc. I have watched what they have done to these nominees and watched them continue to play politics with our economy.

They have been AWOL on the fight against inflation for months. They talk about it a whole lot, but they don't really have solutions. Yet they haven't abandoned their tax cuts for the corporations that are raising people's prices, as the Presiding Officer knows and has spoken passionately about the companies that are making more and more and more money all the time—the biggest profits in American history. These companies continue to raise prices because they can; but my colleagues, when they have had opportunities to get talented, qualified women on the job to fight inflation at the Fed, they have blocked them.

Today, about an hour and a half, 2 hours ago, we offered to vote, right now, to get Chair Powell and Dr. Philip Jefferson on the Fed Board immediately, and part of that motion was to delay the vote on Dr. Lisa Cook until all of our Members are here and healthy.

My colleague on the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee understands that a number of Senate Democrats were sick today and couldn't come and vote. So we just said in our motion: Yes, let's go ahead and vote on Chair Powell—I am going to vote for him—and let's go ahead and vote on Dr. Jefferson. I am going to vote for him, too, and virtually all of my colleagues are, but let's just hold off on Dr. Cook because it is a close vote.

Every single Republican is voting against a very qualified and the first African-American woman to be on the Federal Reserve in its 109-year-old history, but Senator TOOMEY objected to those two votes and with the request to just delay Dr. Cook for a time until Members could come back. He would rather play politics. He continues to denigrate this distinguished nominee—again, the first Black woman to ever be nominated to the Fed. For some reason, the Republican members of my committee take great joy in trying to embarrass this nominee by saying she is not qualified.

Not qualified? Spelman College.
Not qualified? A Marshall Scholar.
Not qualified? A Truman Scholar.
Not qualified? Studied at Oxford.
Not qualified? Has a Ph.D. from Berkeley.

These are all some of the greatest schools in the country.

Not qualified? An economist at Michigan State University—one of the great State institutions in my part of the country. That is not qualified? Dr. Cook is a leading economist, with years of research and international experience in monetary policy on banking and financial crises.

Maybe this is what my colleagues don't like: She has seen how economic policy affects all kinds of different people in different parts of the country—from the rural South, where she grew up, to the industrial Midwest, where she built a career. These are two parts of the country that have been particularly affected in a negative way by globalization.

Again, she is a Spelman College alumna, a Marshall Scholar, a Truman Scholar; studied at Oxford; has a Ph.D. from Berkeley; is a tenured professor for economics and international relations in the State just north of me—in East Lansing, MI, at Michigan State University.

Yet, despite this extensive experience and her broad support, a small but excruciatingly loud—if I could use that adverb—minority, far outside the mainstream, has engaged in a smear campaign against Dr. Cook, the same sorts of attacks that Black Americans and women have faced for far too long.

I won't recite the litany of votes in my committee against very qualified women and very qualified African-American women. Senate Republicans buy into these attacks and in some cases are making these attacks.

These naysayers absurdly claim that Lisa Cook doesn't meet the standards for this position, standards that seem to apply only to certain nominees who happen to be women, particularly Black women.

It is sort of a game of Whac-A-Mole. Each time these assertions and these allegations are rebutted, a new, more untethered one seems to arise.

Dr. Cook would be—and I would assert. I don't just assert. I am certain she will be the first Black woman on the Federal Reserve in its more than 100-year history.

Think about that. This is a country that in my State—the ranking member's State—10 to 15 percent are African Americans. In this country, about 12 or 13 percent are Black. The Federal Reserve is made up of seven people. In 1913, it was founded. In 109 years, there has never been a Black woman. We have a chance to put an outstanding, very qualified Black woman on, and for some reason, they say no.

We are going to confirm her once our Members are healthy. There are a couple of Members who missed it. I believe it is two because of COVID. They are

going to come back, and we are going to confirm her. But for some reason, the ranking member of the committee would like to just embarrass Dr. Cook a little bit more.

First, they make all these unwarranted attacks. Then they block her in committee. Then they—well, they called a boycott to stop any committee action on another very qualified woman. And I might add, parenthetically, because the oil industry didn't like her.

One of the things I particularly like about Dr. Cook is she understands—and maybe this is the objection. They want a Federal Reserve that is more sort of corporate-dominated, corporate-oriented instead of putting workers at the center of our economy.

I know Senator MERKLEY has been one of the leaders here, always understanding that workers should be the center of this economy. That is what Dr. Cook will do in the Federal Reserve.

She understands the smalltown South. She understands the industrial Midwest. She has worked on the west coast. She has worked all over this country. She is international in the way she looks at things. But, fundamentally, she comes down to ordinary, middle-class people and those who aspire to the middle class.

She is ready to get to work to protect Americans from rising prices. We need her. We need all of President Biden's nominees on the job right now.

But, again, Senate Republicans could have earlier said yes—he didn't have to object—yes, we will go forward with Powell; we will go forward with Jefferson, but we want to embarrass Dr. Cook first. We want to show that we have the political muscle to defeat a really, really, really accomplished Black woman first.

That is what they decided, that scoring political points is more important than serving the public and bringing down prices.

So today, once again, a qualified Black woman is going to have to wait. A qualified Black woman is going to have to wait and wait and wait. We are going to confirm her, but she is going to have to wait a little bit longer until the two Members of the Senate who are sick can return.

The American people are going to have to wait, all because Senate Republicans have decided their political gamesmanship is more important than the constituents they are supposed to serve.

I, one last time, say: Make no mistake, we will confirm all of these Federal Reserve nominees. We could do it a lot faster if my colleagues wanted to cooperate.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I have to say it is sad and shameful to hear the chairman suggest, which he has

done repeatedly now, including on the Senate floor, that there is some kind of racial bias against Black women that is a motivation for Republicans.

I would like to point out, for the record, the fact that on the Senate Banking Committee, every single Republican Senator has voted in favor of confirming five different Black women to different posts in just this Congress. President Biden's nominees who are Black women, and they include Cecilia Rouse, Nuria Fernandez, Adrienne Todman, Alexia Latortue, and Alanna McCargo. And yet we hear this preposterous notion that somehow the race of the candidate is what is going on here.

The fact is, we have a difference of opinion about what qualifies a person to serve on the Fed. And it is not some tiny, obscure minority that is concerned about Lisa Cook's qualifications to be fighting inflation when she refused to articulate any plan for dealing with inflation; it was the majority of the Senate who just voted. We just had the vote.

I should also point out that what is the difference here? The difference is, we want to vote, and you just heard the chairman block a vote on President Biden's nominee to Chair the Fed, Jerome Powell, and Professor Philip Jefferson. The chairman doesn't want votes on either of them, apparently, and certainly not on both of them; he just objected.

I would remind everyone that for months now, we have been trying to process the Fed nominees, and our Democratic colleagues refused. What we said was, there are five nominees. Only one of them we are going to object to processing. The reason was because of her radical views about using the supervisory powers of the Fed to allocate capital throughout the economy. That was a pretty radical idea. And guess what? The majority of the Senate agreed with us, and so she withdrew her candidacy.

We had offered for months now to process the other four. Earlier today, we were willing to do all three, but I think the record should show our Democratic colleagues refuse to allow us to have a vote today or tomorrow or this week—that is what we asked for; we used the exact same language the chairman had used earlier—on the Chairman of the Federal Reserve and Professor Philip Jefferson.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, just to be clear, we did offer just an hour, maybe 2 hours ago—the ranking member and I have spoken for maybe 20 minutes, more or less.

Just to be clear, we offered in that unanimous consent request that we vote on both Chair Powell and Dr. Jefferson and simply delay the vote on Dr. Cook because several Members who wanted to vote for her were not here.

Instead, the ranking member decided he wanted to just, one more time, try

to embarrass Dr. Cook. It is not really going to work because we are going to confirm her. But just to be clear, my motion, only 2 hours ago, was let's move forward on those two. That was rejected by Senator TOOMEY.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Sherilyn Peace Garnett, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

TRIBUTE TO BJ WESTLUND

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, a little over 10 years ago, BJ Westlund made his way from Bend, OR, here to our Nation's Capital to serve his fellow Oregonians as a correspondence assistant in my office.

Over the last decade, BJ moved up the ranks to legislative correspondent and legislative aide and then had the opportunity to move back to Oregon, move back to Bend, as my field representative.

He has done an incredible job in that capacity, but he is now, after a number of years in that key role, ready to start a new chapter in his career.

I know that I speak for everyone on my team, whether in Washington, DC, or in Oregon, when I say that we are thrilled to see BJ continue to grow and thrive in his career, but we are also very saddened to see him go.

Ask anyone on the team, past or present, about BJ, and there are a couple of things that might jump to mind: his signature sense of style for one. He loves to wear a good vest. Whether here in DC or in Oregon, it is hard for anyone to picture BJ without a good vest. And wherever BJ is, you can bet there is a tasty cold mix of iced tea and lemonade not far away.

And BJ has taken on the role of overseeing the Team Merkley candy desk while he was here in Washington, DC, making sure it was always stashed with really good candy.

Before we changed offices in Hart, the legislative team was split between two floors. BJ was upstairs working on environmental and energy issues and referred to that area as "Eastern Oregon." But without fail, you could find a steady stream of folks going up the staircase to stop by BJ's desk and grab a piece of candy and chat. It was our version of the office water cooler and a way for BJ to help build a sense of community between all the team members.

That is the fourth thing that comes to mind when people think about BJ, is his sense of community, his welcoming presence, his ability to connect. It is what made him such an effective legislative staffer, working with groups on their priorities, advocating for critical appropriations funding. And for the